

Contact: Rick Haney (304) 623-5631

Email: Richard.haney@sba.gov

Internet: www.sba.gov/wv

Woman-Owned W.Va. Firm Lands Federal Contract

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Healthcare Management Solutions, LLC, a woman-owned, small disadvantaged firm, signed their first federal contract with the Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The company, based in Fairmont W.Va., is certified by the U.S. Small Business Administration to receive special consideration for federal contracts under the agency's 8(a) Business Development Program.

The signing ceremony took place at the Cavalcade of Trade Expo held on Oct 12, at the Charleston Civic Center. Stephanie Watkins, SBA Region III Administrator (Mid-Atlantic Region); Leah Heimbach and Patti Hodges, Principals of HMS; Alice Roache, Small Business Specialist CMS; and Judy K. McCauley, director of the SBA's West Virginia District Office, all took part in the ceremony.

The 8(a) Business Development program is an essential instrument for helping socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs gain access to the economic mainstream of American society. The SBA has helped thousands of aspiring entrepreneurs over the years to gain a foothold in government contracting. Divided into two phases over nine years, certified companies advance from a four-year developmental stage to a five-year transitional stage.

The program provides access to sole-source contracts, up to a ceiling of \$3 million for goods and services and \$5 million for manufacturing. While the SBA helps, participant firms build competitive and institutional know-how, the agency also encourages participation in competitive acquisitions.

"HMS is an excellent example of what 8(a) companies and small businesses need to do in order to obtain a government contract," said Roache. "It was clearly evident they did their homework and came to the table well prepared. This is probably the first of many contracts for this company."

The contract includes execution of on-site surveys and education for intermediate care facilities who serve persons with mental retardation and related conditions (ICF/MRs). These services, provided nationwide, are in response to:

- 1) lessons learned from collected data through federal monitoring and oversight that was conducted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and
- 2) the need to continue with the CMS mandate to assure consistency with the intent of the ICF/MR regulations. The contract will result in the creation of 6 employment positions for HMS.

According to Heimbach and Hodges, the contract is directly in line with company's expertise. "We are delighted to be involved in this noble project, which aims to improve the care of those served by ICF/MRs. We are grateful for the wisdom and guidance provided by the SBA," Heimbach said.

Heimbach and Hodges established HMS in August of 2002. Each brings unique and broad based knowledge to the government and private health care sectors. HMS has substantial past performance in program/performance evaluation, market research and analysis, operational solutions, and education and training.

The women executives bring clinical, administrative, legal, and research skills to bear for their clients. They have served as invited speakers on a variety of health care related topics on a state, regional, and national level, and are well published.

“The SBA 8(a) program provides a wonderful opportunity for small firms such as HMS, to develop businesses experience via federal procurement opportunities,” said McCauley.

The SBA serves to maintain and strengthen the nation’s economy by aiding, counseling, assisting and protecting the interests of small businesses and by helping families recover from national disasters. The SBA 8(a) Business Development Program helps socially and economically disadvantaged business owners gain equal access to the resources necessary to develop their business, thereby, improving their ability to compete in the mainstream of the American economy.

To learn more about the agency’s business development programs, visit the SBA’s web site at www.sba.gov/8abd or contact the SBA at (304) 623-5631.

###